

## Negative Impacts of Current "Minimum Net Lot Area" Rules In Sunnyvale

Probably hundreds (likely much more) of residential units in multi-family buildings would be eliminated from Sunnyvale's housing stock if they were to be re-built today.

This fact is due mainly to the most recent "Minimum Net Lot Area" rule, implemented approximately 8 years ago. This rule increased the minimum lot area required to the following square footages: duplex 6,500, tri-plex 7,200, and 4-plex 8,000.

Even if properties were able to meet all current requirements such as parking, setback, floor area ratio, lot coverage, etc., the increased "minimum lot area" rule alone would dramatically limit the number of units that could be re-built. (See "Example of Units Lost") Note: Many of the multi-family buildings in the example had already been affected by a previous, density limiting rule change requiring "1,800 sq. ft. of lot space per unit"

All of the buildings referred to in the example are in the proper R-3 multi-family zoning district, and, were built legally when originally constructed. The "minimum lot size" rule has caused all but one of these buildings to become "non-conforming". I reviewed two other areas in town, both also had severe loss of units results.

Additionally, these smaller buildings are the least expensive way to buy on a per unit basis, making them a viable alternative for housing ownership. I know at least 5 of the 24 multi-family buildings on my street have been occupied by the owner(s).

Current FAR, lot coverage, parking requirements, and the "1,800 sq. ft. of lot space per unit" rule, etc., are restrictive enough on their own to ensure the look of, and, how dense an area can be built. Eliminating a significant amount of rental and first time buyer opportunities in today's high priced market is probably not overall beneficial. The "Minimum Net Lot Area" rule should be revisited and, I believe, adjusted to a previous standard.

Thank You. 883 Blair Av. #3 (408)737-2391

3/13/06

Rick Loughran. Sunnyvale, 94087

Example of Units Lost  
(Blair Ave. Sunnyvale)

<u>Address</u> (Blair Av.)	<u>Current # Units</u>	<u>Lot Size</u> (Sq. Ft.)	<u>Units Lost due to 1st</u> <u>Density Rule Change</u> ( "1,800 Sq. Ft. of Lot Area Needed per Unit")	<u>Units Lost Due to 2nd.</u> <u>More Restrictive.</u> <u>Rule Change</u> ( "Minimum Lot Size")
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Duplex: 6,500 Sq. ft  
Triplex: 7,200 Sq. ft  
Four-plex: 8,000  
Sq.ft

825	4	7299	0	1
828	3	5705	0	2
829	4	6897	1	2
832	3	5705	0	2
833	4	6897	1	2
836	3	5207	1	2
837	4	6294	1	3
840	3	5205	1	2
841	4	6050	1	3
845	5	6050	2	4
848	7	11000	1	1
849	5	7502	1	2
852	5	5821	2	4
853	5	6678	2	3
858	4	5700	1	3
859	5	6450	2	4
864	4	5700	1	3
865	3	6400	0	2
870	3	6732	0	1
871	3	6598	0	1
875	3	6656	0	1
883	4	7347	0	1
888	3	5491	0	2
889	4	8009	0	0

Total	95		18 (19%)	51 (54%)
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Jack Cunniff Ph.D.  
929 Mango Ave  
Sunnyvale, CA 04087  
408 636 3164

April 10, 2006

To The Planning Board,

I am writing this letter to the Planning Board to convey our intentions regarding the conversion of the apartment 4-plex at 1293-1299 Parkington Ave. My family lives less than 1 mile from the 4-plex. Our 7 year old daughter, Skylar, is a first grade student at Cherry Chase. We expect she'll go to Sunnyvale Middle School and then to Homestead High School. We have no intentions of leaving this neighborhood.

It is our hope to convert the apartments to condominiums. We intend to *dramatically* improve the appearance of the building and the property and turn this "tenement" into 4 beautiful condominiums.

Our plans include:

- ❖ Add 4 parking spots with one handicap accessible
- ❖ Add a standup washer/dryer to each apartment
- ❖ Replace all kitchen appliances in each apartment
- ❖ Replace all cabinets and sinks/counters in each apartment
- ❖ Add Dishwasher to each apartment
- ❖ Replace Tub and Sink and add vanity to each apartment.
- ❖ Replace tile flooring in each apartment
- ❖ Replace carpeting in each apartment
- ❖ Repaint each apartment
- ❖ Significantly add plants/trees/landscaping.

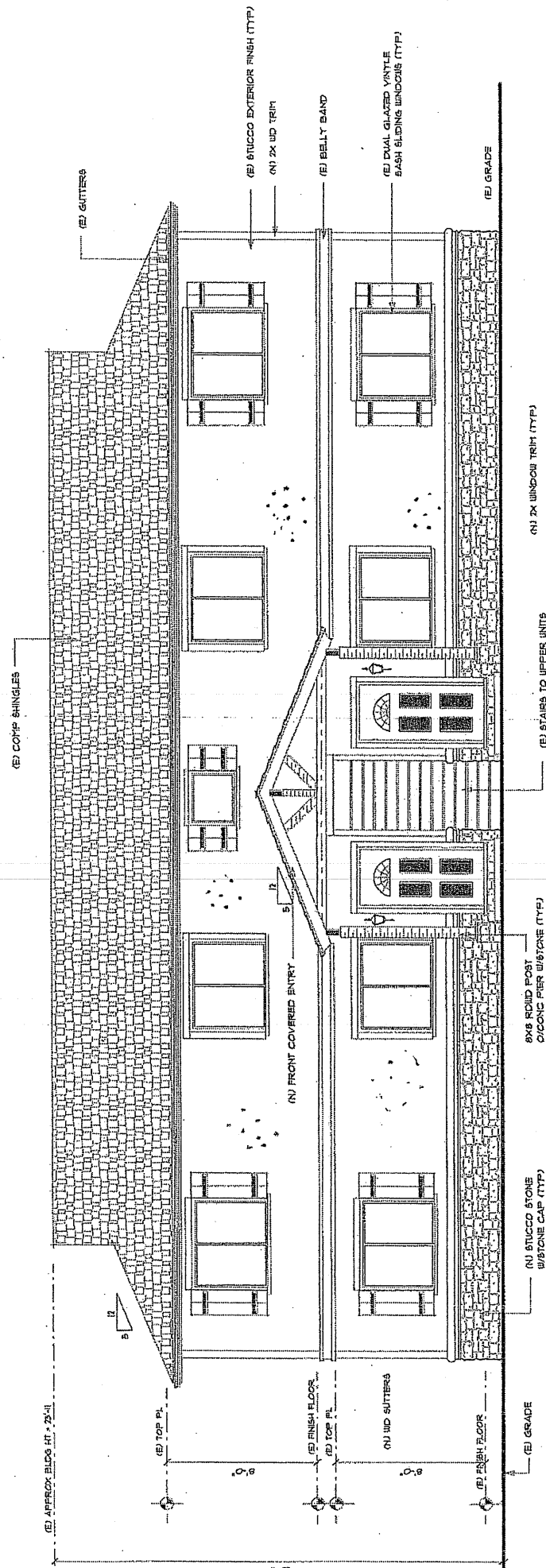
In short, the insides will look brand new and the outside will distinguish the building in the neighborhood. The redone landscaping will clearly distinguish the property from the other drab properties. Hopefully, the conversion and improvements at 1293 will spark a rejuvenation of this area of Parkington Avenue.

It is my hope that, by converting a drab apartment 4-plex into condominiums, the building will turn a profit, 4 families will be allowed to "buy in" to Cherry Chase, the neighborhood will improve dramatically, and tax donations to the city will go up.

This is our intention and desire.



Jack Cunniff



1/4" FRONT ELEVATION - WEST



# Silicon Valley

Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup>

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April 24, 2006

Chairman Charles Hungerford  
Sunnyvale Planning Commission  
P.O. Box 3707  
Sunnyvale, CA 94088-3707

Dear Chairman Hungerford and Commissioners,

The Silicon Valley Association of Realtors is a professional trade association representing 4000 real estate professionals in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. Our association has been a long-time proponent of homeownership and housing affordability and would like to comment on the proposed zoning changes to increase the rate of homeownership in Sunnyvale.

A high rate of homeownership is an important component to the stable and productive development of any community. Owning a home not only brings significant financial benefits to homeowners through equity and tax advantages but it also brings significant benefits to the community. Homeowners stay in one place longer, and are invested in building and improving the community around them. Given these benefits we are encouraged by strong action the Council, staff and Planning Commission have taken by examining this issue.

According to Sunnyvale Realtors, first-time homebuyers are the segment of the community that have the most difficulty in gaining a foothold in the real estate market. Once a first home has been purchased, these new homeowners have the opportunity to build equity and can move through the real estate market purchasing homes that fit their growing and changing needs. The most effective way to increase the homeownership rate in Sunnyvale is to take steps to encourage the construction of housing that can be purchased by first time homebuyers. Steps the city is taking to encourage the conversion of apartment buildings to condominiums, adding flexibility to encourage construction of new single family homes, and creating zoning designations for townhomes will increase housing opportunities for renters who looking to become first time home homeowners.

We are concerned; however, about the potential consequences of increasing the BMR requirement for condominium conversions to from 12.5 to 15 percent. Such a requirement could be counter-productive and end up discouraging the creation of the very kind of ownership opportunities the city wishes to produce. The proposed five-unit requirement is also without precedent in Sunnyvale policy. BMR requirements for all other types of housing apply at nine units, not at five as proposed for condominium conversions. Furthermore, the increase is unnecessary. The City has very wisely included a provision in the current BMR standards that allowed an increase in BMR to 15

percent only if there was demonstrated evidence of a shortage of affordable rental housing. The condominium conversion portions of the proposal already include measures to ensure that the conversion will not negatively impact the city's ability to provide housing for all segments of the community. Given that those safeguards already exist, it makes little sense to hold condominium conversions up to a more stringent standard than other forms of ownership housing.

We congratulate Sunnyvale on its efforts and willingness to tackle this important issue. Increasing the supply of ownership housing and promoting opportunities for renters to become owners are important aspects of building a vibrant community. We look forward to working with the Planning Commission and City Council further on this issue. Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments.

Sincerely,



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